



Welcome

Welcome to the September 2026 issue of the West Carleton Garden Club's newsletter, *The Watering Can*!

As you can see, we have a new design and layout. In each issue, we will have the following editorials:

1. **Welcome** – an overview of what's inside
2. **News & Events** – here you will find upcoming meeting and speaker information, volunteer opportunities, community events and Executive news updates
3. **This Month in the Garden** – featuring a seasonal/themed article with Tips and Tricks
4. **Club Highlights** – news from the previous month
5. **Test Your Skills** – each month will include a quiz, plant identification, or some other fun activity
6. **Profile of the Month** – a horticultural highlight!
7. **End Notes** – Any additional information

Each month, the newsletter's theme will be aligned with the Club's activities – September we are excited to focus on *Birds in the Garden*!

We hope you enjoy the newsletter, and happy gardening!!



Thank You!!

A huge thank you to **Anne Gadbois** who has been the author and architect of the West Carleton Garden Club Newsletters for the past 10 years! Thank you for your time, insights, and commitment to sharing our garden news and keeping our community connected





WCGC News & Events

Join us Sept 8 at Carp Memorial Hall (3739 Carp Road) for the Fall Flower show followed by the WCGC monthly meeting – more details as follows:

Fall Flower and Vegetable Show

- Please bring your entries between 6:15pm and 7:15pm
- The theme this year is *Hayride at the Orchard*
- Please refer to the [Fall Flower Show Schedule](#) for more information

WCGC Meeting

- At 7:30pm we will be hearing from Berit Erikson from *The Corner Pollinator*.
- One of Ottawa's best-known advocates for native plant and pollinator gardening, Berit will speaking on Attracting Birds to your Garden.

September Garden Checklist

- ✓ Divide overcrowded perennials
- ✓ Plant spring-flowering bulbs
- ✓ Overseed thin lawns
- ✓ Bring houseplants indoors before cool nights
- ✓ Leave some seed heads standing for birds
- ✓ Start planning next year's garden



Other Notable Ottawa-area Events

- Free Native Plant Giveaway – hosted by the Ottawa Wildflower Seed Society, this even will be September 12, 11am, near the Trolley Station
- Feast of Fall – hosted by Harvest Ottawa, Feast of Fall is a multi-chef food experience showcasing Ottawa's award-winning chefs and artisanal beverage producers. All proceeds support Youturn Youth Services. Sept 16, 6-10pm, Ottawa Art Gallery (10 Daly Ave.) www.harvestottawa.ca
- Various Horticulture Clubs and Societies in the Ottawa area, each with their own focus for the month of September. This includes the growing garlic (Kemptville), growing peonies (Cornwall), fruits (Nepean), and the Nepean Horticultural Society Outdoor Plant Sale Sept 12, 9am, at Julian of Norwich Anglican Church (Rossland Ave and Merivale Road)
- For more events and activities, please see [GardeningCalendar](#)



In the Garden

Gardening for the Birds

Creating a truly bird-friendly garden goes well beyond hanging a feeder. In our region, the greatest benefit comes from designing landscapes that provide food and habitat throughout the seasons. Native trees and shrubs such as serviceberry, nannyberry, and red-osier dogwood offer berries when migrating birds need them most, while coneflowers, asters, and native grasses supply seed well into winter.

Consider leaving perennial seed heads standing until spring. Not only do they provide valuable winter forage for goldfinches and juncos, but hollow stems also shelter beneficial insects and native bees. Likewise, a layer of autumn leaves beneath shrubs supports countless invertebrates—the protein-rich food that chickadees, wrens, and other songbirds rely on when raising nestlings.

Water remains one of the most overlooked garden features. A shallow, moving water source will often attract a greater diversity of birds than an additional feeder.

As gardeners, we often strive for tidiness. Yet a garden that embraces a little seasonal "mess" is often far richer ecologically. By planting for all four seasons and allowing nature to complete its cycle, we create landscapes that are not only beautiful but also support the birds that make our gardens feel truly alive

Did You Know?

- **Black oil sunflower** attracts the widest variety of birds.
- **Suet** provides essential high-energy food in fall and winter.
- **Birds need more water than food.** A clean, shallow birdbath can attract species that rarely visit feeders, especially during hot weather



Tips and Tricks:

Seed Swap with Donna Cook

September is the perfect time to start collecting and prepping seeds for our annual October Seed Swap:

- Always **harvest** your seeds when they're dry (mid-day or early afternoon on a sunny day is ideal). Lay seeds out separately on newspaper to help the drying process.
- To **save** your dried seeds, store them in a cool, dry place in a labelled envelop, airtight jar, or hand-made seed packets. Please include:
 - Plant name
 - Plant height
 - Growing conditions (sun/part shade)
 - Flower colour (if possible)
- **Trading** is a great way to receive new flower seeds; passing along our flower and/or vegetable seeds keeps unique plant species abundant and supports next generations of heritage plants.
 - Trade your **dug up plants** too!



Club Highlights

It was a busy summer in West Carleton! Our final meeting in June included a social the flower show, and our Executive elections.

Flower Show

Thank you to Gay MacQuarrie for organizing the June flower show, and everyone who helped with the set-up and clean-up. Members presented some lovely specimens and arrangements, and big congratulations to the winners:

- **Best in Show, Horticulture** - Donna Caldwell (Trophy and Brown's Independent Grocer \$25 gift card)
- **Best in Show, Design** - Angela Bonneau (Trophy and Black Sheep Perennials \$100 gift card)
- **Highest Aggregate Points in Horticulture (all classes)** - Donna Caldwell (Gemmell's Garden Centre \$25 gift card)

Executive Elections

Our Executive elections went well, with some new faces and some others stepping down. Thank you to Pat Buchanan for your support (in numerous roles!) over the past 10 years and welcome new members! See current Board members for 2026/27 at [WCGCExecutive](#)

Garden Tour

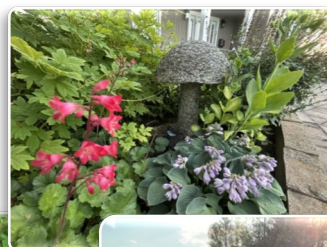
In mid July, Johanna and Merrill Cutts invited WCGC members to their home for a **guided garden tour**. A stunning 10 acres in rural Carp and a Certified Monarch Waystation, the Cutts' gardens included fruit orchards, vegetable garden, a large pond, and pollinator and native gardens. Thank you for opening your gardens to us!



Pictures from the WCGC June Flower Show

(courtesy of photographer Dan Stumpf)

Pictures from Johanna and Merrill Cutts' Garden Tour





Test Your Skills

A. Guess What?

- I provide shelter, nesting space, and protection from predators.
- I may be evergreen, deciduous, native, or berry-producing.
- Birds perch, hide, and sometimes build their homes in me
- What Am I?

B. Which bird is most attracted to Nyjer seed?

- A. Blue Jay
- B. Goldfinch
- C. Robin
- D. Cardinal

Answer: A - shrub
Answer: B - Goldfinch



End Notes

Reminder! WCGC September Meeting

- Join us Sept 8 for the Fall Flower, Fruit, and Vegetable Show and speaker Berit Erikson from the Corner Pollinator.
- Entries to the show should be placed between 6:15-7:15pm, with the meeting starting at 7:30pm.



Profile of the Month

Purple Coneflower

- ✓ Seeds loved by American Goldfinches
- ✓ Native perennial
- ✓ Long bloom season
- ✓ Leave seed heads standing through winter
- ✓ Supports pollinators and birds



Coming in October...

- WCGC Annual Seed Swap (see page 3 for more details)
- Master Gardener Nancy McDonald speaking on the Fall Garden: What to plant, store, remove and divide